VERMONT
Quarterly

VERMONT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

VOL. XV
NO. 2

APRIL
1947

Vermont Historical Society

MONTPELIER, VERMONT

LEON S. GAY, *President*
Cavendish, Vermont

ELBERT S. BRIGHAM, *Vice President*
ARTHUR W. PEACH, *Vice President*
CLARA E. FOLLETTE, *Secretary*
ALBERT E. SLAYTON, *Treasurer*

Board of Curators

GEORGE H. AMIDON, *Montpelier*
ELBERT S. BRIGHAM, *Montpelier*
HORACE BROWN, *Springfield*
JOHN CLEMENT, *Rutland*
LEON W. DEAN, *Burlington*
WALTER HARD, *Manchester*
F. W. HARRINGTON, *Montpelier*
IDA B. HORTON, *Montpelier*
JOHN C. HUDEN, *Montpelier*
DORMAN B. E. KENT, *Montpelier*
JOHN H. MCDILL, *Woodstock*
VINCENT B. MALONEY, *Winooski*
VREST ORTON, *Weston*
ARTHUR W. PEACH, *Northfield*
MORTIMER R. PROCTOR, *Proctor*
RALPH W. PUTNAM, *Waterbury*
DOROTHY RANDOLPH, *Montpelier*
HAROLD G. RUGG, *Hanover, N.H.*
CURTIS R. SMITH, *St. Albans*
WILLIAM J. WILGUS, *Ascutney*

Ex Officio Members

LEON S. GAY, *President*
HARRISON J. CONANT, *State Librarian*
RAWSON C. MYRICK, *Secretary of State*
DAVID V. ANDERSON, *Auditor*

EARLE WILLIAMS NEWTON, *Director*
CLARA E. FOLLETTE, *Assistant to the Director*
PLINY F. MORSE, *Custodian*

The Vermont Historical Society is both an archives of invaluable material for the study of community, state and nation, and an educational institution promoting the study of and research in history as a way of approach to the problems of man in his relation to society. It performs for the State of Vermont its historical function, and is the official state historical society, occupying quarters in the State Library and Supreme Court Building, where it maintains its library, manuscript collections, and the State Museum.

It is supported both by state appropriation and by private endowment. Bequests and gifts, either of funds, of books and manuscripts, or of relics, are welcomed. The Society, through its educational activities, its publications, and its program of preservation of historical materials, serves a membership of over five hundred as well as the citizens of Vermont. Its resources are open to any serious student between the hours of 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., except Saturdays and Sundays.

You and your friends are cordially invited to join the Society and thereby further its aims and objectives. Membership (three dollars) brings with it a yearly subscription to the VERMONT QUARTERLY, *as well as special publication discounts.*

NEW SERIES • PRICE 75 CTS. • VOL. XV, NO. 2

VERMONT

Quarterly

A MAGAZINE OF HISTORY

EDITED BY EARLE WILLIAMS NEWTON

APRIL 1947

PUBLISHED BY
THE VERMONT HISTORICAL SOCIETY
MONTPELIER, VERMONT

COPYRIGHT 1947 BY THE VERMONT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Printed and made in the United States of America by E. L. Hildreth & Company, Inc.
Publication Office: 8 Harmony Place, Brattleboro, Vermont
$3.00 A Year Published Quarterly 75 Cents A Copy
Subscription included in annual membership dues: $3.00
EDITORIAL OFFICE: MONTPELIER, VT.
Entered as second-class matter December 23, 1937, at the post office at Brattleboro, Vermont, under the Act of August 24, 1912.

Contents

Recognition of Achievement, 75
BY EARLE WILLIAMS NEWTON

Weston in Retrospect, 79
BY RAYMOND TAYLOR

The Weston Revival, 89
BY VREST ORTON

Weston in Pictures, 96

Give Us This Day . . ., 105
BY BAIRD HALL

The Vermont Guild, 111
BY PAUL L. ORTON

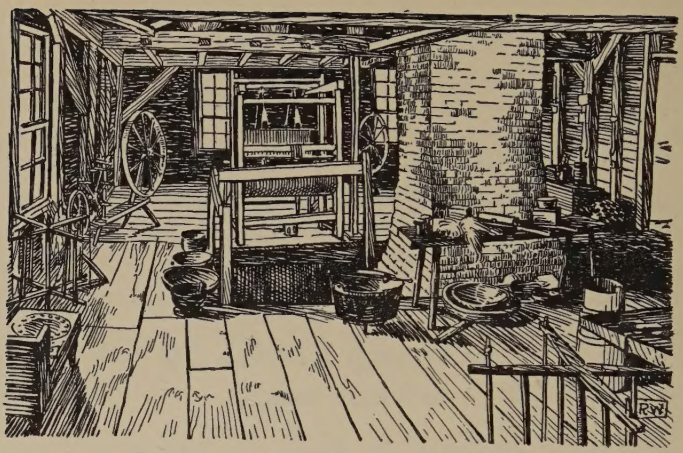
The Farrar-Mansur House, 117
BY STEVEN AGNES HALL

The Weston Playhouse, 121
BY ELEANOR MARSHALL

The Vermont Country Store, 125
BY GEORGE WRIGHT JUN.

Cover Drawing
BY EDWARD SANBORN

Text Drawings
BY ROY WILLIAMS



Recognition of Achievement

THE articles printed in this slender volume were written at the request of the Director of the Vermont Historical Society, on the occasion of the presentation to the town of Weston of the Annual Award of Merit of the American Association for State and Local History, at the Annual Meeting of the Society, January 14, 1947.

While it was recognized that the various projects involved in the restoration of this historic community had been undertaken by various groups and committees, the award was made to the Community Club of Weston as the organization most representative of its people.

"To the Community Club of Weston, an organization representing the people of Weston," the citation reads, "for the rescue of an ancient tavern from destruction; for its restoration as a historic house museum of exceptional merit; for the establishment of a guild of old-time crafts and industries, with attendant attraction of native craftsmen of unusual skill and talent; together with other activities for the revival of the economic and social life of the town through stimulation of pride and interest in its historic heritage."

The presentation was made to Mr. Raymond Taylor, President of the Community Club, by the undersigned, acting in his capacity as Secretary of the American Association for State and Local History. This national association makes Awards of Merit to organizations and individuals for outstanding accomplishments in the field of local history.

The town of Weston is truly a unique community, particularly in the extent to which it has, by local activity, restored not only its historic façade, but its economic vigor and community spirit as well. Begun by men like Raymond Taylor, who have lived in Weston all their lives, the work has been taken up also by the many people who have been lately drawn to the town as permanent residents by its charm and new economic opportunities.

Few in the latter group have done more than Vrest Orton, to whom the editor is greatly indebted for assistance in gathering together these essays. But the list of old and new residents who have participated in this unique accomplishment is too long for inclusion here; the reader will find them in their proper roles in the text which follows.

EARLE WILLIAMS NEWTON, *Editor*

Mt. Holly
Ludlow
C.C.C. Camp
Picnic Area
Moses Pond
Mt. Tabor
Peabody Mt. 2787 ft.
Bennett School
Terrible Mountain
Trout Club
Holt Mt.
Peru
WESTON VILLAGE
Andover
Markham Mt.
Landgrove
Hidden Hill
West River
Weston Island
Cobble Mt.
Londonderry
N

WESTON, 1938

Weston in Retrospect

ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO

By RAYMOND TAYLOR

SLIGHTLY over a hundred years ago, and sixty-four years after the first permanent settlement, Weston had reached its peak in population and industry. Located at the headwaters of the Wantastiquet, or West River, it was hemmed in by the Green Mountains, and possibly because of this isolation it had become even more self-sufficient than many of the neighboring towns.

In 1840 Weston village was the industrial and social center of a community of 1032 inhabitants. Of these about 400 were actually residents of the village, the others living on the farms or grouped around the hamlet at the south end of the town, which was locally known as "The Island."

Governor Wentworth, of New Hampshire, granted Weston as part of Andover in 1761. It was first settled in 1768, and a permanent settlement made in 1776. Twenty-four years after this date the ancient town was divided, and the West town of Andover was organized as Weston on March 4, 1800. There were then 71 poll tax payers in the new town. In 1810 the population had mounted to 629, and this increased steadily until 1840.

At that time the village was a thriving settlement with many diversified industries. Many of these were located in the business section west of the Wantastiquet. For some unknown reason this part of the village was called "Charlestown." Here were centered the school house, Baptist Church, three tailors, two cloth dressing mills, the Hannum shop, a "Hatter's Shop," shoemaker, tannery, carding mill, store, postoffice, wheelwright, cooper, and blacksmith.

One of the most picturesque buildings in the "Charlestown" district was "The Ark," or, as it was known to earlier generations, the "Old

Beehive." The exact date of its erection is unknown, but it was in use as a store by Ambrose Pease from the early 1820's until 1845. Being built against the hillside, the building was unique in that it could be entered from the ground on each of its three floors. Probably the main building was erected by Mr. Pease, and the wings added at a later date. The store was on the lowest floor, and the family of the storekeeper lived on the top floor. On the second floor, widow Abigail Negus, sister of Ambrose, plied her trade of tailoress. Close by and high up the bank of the old cemetery which nearly touched the rear of the Ark, was the blacksmith's shop of Aaron Lawrence. Directly across the road stood the first school house, whose site is mentioned in the records as "the spot of ground where the first school house stood," purchased by Ambrose Pease from District No. 3, after the second school house had been built farther down the street. Below this house stood Ambrose's "Woolen Factory," and below that the carding mill owned by John Stuart. Over the bridge to the right was the Hannum axe factory, which also manufactured shears, and farther up the stream the fulling and cloth dressing works of Asa Gilmore. At one time a hotel was kept in the second story of the Ark, where an innkeeper named Blodgett entertained his guests. His sign is said to have been made of large letters clipped from newspapers and pasted on a board. It was displayed in a window.

In this venerable structure dwelt at various times the families of Samuel Peabody, Jr., Nelson Waite and the widow, Hannah Spaulding, also many other persons well known as being "the first families" of Weston, and credited with the distinction of occupying its first apartment house. In after years it became just a tenement house with accommodations for sheltering as many as six families. Early in the third decade of this century the building was torn down.

Across the street from the Hannum Axe Factory was the home which was doubtless built by David Drury, one of the early settlers, and by him sold to Isaac Morgan in 1799. In 1816 Morgan, being then of Poultney, sold it to David Steele, from whom it passed successively to Perkins N. Wiley and to Ambrose Pease in 1829. Here lived Dr. Roger Smith and his family, including his sons, Asa D., later President of Dartmouth College, and Horace, once Dean of the Albany Law School.

The Gilmore house, on the Landgrove road (now owned by Miss Rosalie Weiss), was built by Asa Gilmore, who came to Weston from

Amherst, N.H. late in the eighteenth century. Here his children were born, including Joseph Albree, Civil War Governor of New Hampshire, and Addison, the first President of the Boston and Albany R.R.

As early as 1803 mention is made of a dwelling house, barn and outhouses where the Wilder Memorial Library now stands. Here Ichabod Onion and Ebenezer White operated potash works and a tannery during this same period. John Wilder occupied the building when he first came to Weston, and from there removed to the new house, erected in 1827, now owned by his granddaughter, Helen Wilder Tuttle. The old building was for many years a tannery, then a tenement house. It was restored in 1908 by Lewis Parkhurst and presented to the town as the "Wilder Memorial Library." The Wilder homestead served Judge John Wilder as a postoffice during his term as postmaster from 1829 to 1850.

Felt hats were manufactured by Caleb Fenn in the house which is now the parsonage of the Community Church. On Dec. 5, 1832 he deeded to Ambrose Pease "land on which the 'Hatter's Shop' now stands." A scion of this same Fenn family, William Wallace Fenn, D.D., Dean of the Harvard Divinity School, 1906–22, is buried in the Village cemetery.

While the section east of the river was more residential in character, it did not lack industries. Ezekiel Pease, one of the early settlers, built a house and sawmill here about 1780. The house is the ell of the present Taylor homestead. This property was bought by Oliver Farrar in 1795, and he probably occupied the house while building the present Farrar-Mansur house, part of which was completed as early as 1797. Farrar operated the mill and kept a tavern in the Farrar-Mansur house previous to 1800, when Weston's first town meeting was held there. From that time until his death this house was a community center, serving not only as a tavern for the entertainment of travelers, but also as a dance hall, Masonic lodge room, court room and a center for the production of plays in the 1820's and later. Following his death the house and mill were sold to James F. Wallace, who used the mill for the manufacture of wooden bowls. In 1857 Franklin Mansur purchased the house and the mill, which he converted into a sawmill. These remained in the possession of three generations of the Mansur family until 1932 when Frank Mansur deeded the house to the Weston Community Club to be restored as a historic house museum. The mill was sold to the Vermont Guild of Old Time Crafts and Industries in 1936.

Two shoemakers, James Carter and Emerson Ross, plied their trade east of the river. Carter's shop was located east of the road on the hill to which his family gave its name. Ross built the house now owned by Vrest Orton, and used part of the upper story as a shop. This was in the early 1830's.

Besides the Farrar Tavern, there was another "Tavern in the town" which was operated by James Taylor from the late 1830's through 1845, and by Pease and Foster from that date until 1851. This was the building which now houses the Vermont Country Store.

The first store in Weston village was located on or near the site of Fannie Parkhurst's house, and it also served as the first postoffice. Fullerton and Henry were the proprietors of the store and the first postmaster was William G. Henry. The Parkhurst house was long known as the Kimball house from an early owner, Henry I. Kimball, who was doubtless Weston's first tinsmith. His tinshop was in the building where Ervin Jacquith lives. Late in the century Dr. Herbert Howe used this as a print shop where he published a "Medical Index" which had a national circulation.

As late as 1845 Smith and Bryant had a starch factory near the south end of the village, at the end of what was then known as "Factory Street." For more than a decade they conducted a flourishing business there, turning into starch the potatoes grown on hundreds of acres in Weston and neighboring towns. At this time many residents of Weston were seeking better paid jobs in the factory towns of Massachusetts. Those who remained soon demanded higher wages, and this in turn increased both the cost of producing the potatoes and their manufacture into starch. It was soon evident that starch could no longer be made at a profit, and the enterprise was abandoned. This was also true of other business ventures of this period.

The School House in the Third or Village District was a two story structure of brick standing at the upper end of the pond in front of the Church on the Hill. It was built in 1830 to replace the first school house which the district had outgrown. In 1843 it had a "Master's School for schollars over ten years," and a "Mistress' School" for those under ten, with a total enrollment of 112 pupils. At that time there were twelve districts in town with an enrollment of approximately 400 pupils. The school house was also used for the singing schools which were supported by popular subscription, and "dramatic entertainments" for which the town was even then famous.

Each school district was a miniature republic, and "Deestrick" meetings were of frequent occurrence. At these meetings each voter was privileged to discuss at length every detail concerning building and repairing the school houses and hiring school masters or school dames. As early as 1820 it was voted to "Set board of teachers up to Vendue to lowest bidder," the prices paid being $1.50 and $1.60 per week. In the farming community of the Shattuck District the price was lower,—"Thomas Richardson to board the School Dame at fifty-nine cents per week."

About 1840 the Village District voted to "order Master and Mistress not to instruct scholars outside the District." Evidently the Master failed to obey, for two months later a meeting was held at which it was voted to pass over the article to dismiss the Master for failing to follow these instructions, and to choose Asa B. Foster "an agent to prosecute such persons as may have intruded themselves into our school." The practical wisdom of the voters is seen in the fact that they also chose Stephen Smith an agent "to see that the above agent does his duty."

Evidently the sanitary conditions of those days were not equal to those of the present day, for in 1838 the Shattuck District voted "to bild aback hous and finish it off in good order by the 15th of May next." Jacob Cheever bid off this "hous to bild for five dollars." Shortly after another meeting was called and it was voted "not to bild aback hous, but to do as we have hitherto done."

The present Village School house was erected in 1861, the bricks from the second school house being used in the foundation.

Another landmark which deserves special mention is the "Union Store" building, which stood between the Ross or Orton house and the bridge. Division No. 303 of the New England Protective Union was organized in Weston, Nov. 15, 1851, "to secure to each member thereof the common necessities of life at the lowest possible terms." To this end the Union in co-operation with other Divisions throughout New England instituted a system of co-operative buying which was expected to lower the high cost of living, which was a problem 95 years ago as it is today. Each member of the Union had to purchase one share of stock at $15, but "Any widow or maiden lady by depositing with the president or secretary the sum of $5. shall be entitled to a regular trading card the same as a member." The Union did a flourishing business until 1866 when it was sold by vote of the stockholders. Sprague and Richardson, H. E. Partridge, E. P. Blodgett and James

A. Parkhurst operated stores here in later years. The building, which at one time had a hotel on the second and third floors, and a barber shop in the south end of the lower floor, was burned in 1905.

From 1840 until about 1860 Weston had three churches,—Congregational, Baptist and Universalist. In June 1816 the "Union Parish Meeting and Town House" was built, and the town allotted Sundays to the different denominations in proportion to their membership.

The first church to be organized was the Congregational Society in 1799, and their first settled minister was Rev. Stillman Morgan, who remained from 1828 to 1831. In accordance with the terms of the Wentworth charter he received the lot of land provided for the first settled minister in town. On his removal from Weston he deeded to the Selectmen and their successors in office this land subject to the condition that the rents and avails therefrom should be forever divided between the religious societies of the town. The Congregational Church was built in 1839, and was deeded to the Weston Community Club in 1922, the church having been closed.

The Baptist Society was organized in 1815, and built what is now known as "The Church-on-the-Hill" in 1838. In 1843 the Baptist membership reached its high mark of 146. The following story from a historical paper prepared about 1870 by H. H. Gutterson of Andover shows that the Weston Baptists were more liberal in their religious views than their fellow members in neighboring towns. "In Weston, in the early days of his ministry, Elder Joel Manning of Andover, preached the funeral of Polly Heald, a young lady who had died outside the pale of the church. He was especially harsh and unfeeling in his language at this time, and for the last hymn he gave out "The Death of a Sinner," a hymn too often used on such occasions. The first two stanzas are as follows:

My thoughts on awful subjects roll,
Damnation and the dead.
What horrors seize the guilty soul
Upon a dying bed.

Lingering about these mortal shores,
She makes a long delay,
Till like a flood, with rapid force,
Death sweeps the wretch away.

As he reached the line,—"Death sweeps the wretch away," he pointed down to the coffin in which the poor girl lay. At this the leader of the choir, Josiah Fisk, told the choir to sing the next hymn, entitled "The Death and Burial of a Saint," which they did, to the infinite wrath and disgust of the Elder, who doubtless regarded it as an act of unpardonable heresy. I give the first stanza:

Why do we mourn departed friends,
Or shake at death's alarms?
'Tis but the voice that Jesus sends
To call them to his arms.

The date of the organization of the Universalist Church is unknown, but they had a flourishing society here as early as 1829. In 1843 Rev. Samuel C. Loveland became the minister, and his dynamic personality brought this church into a leading position in the religious field during his incumbency. The interest and membership in this denomination slumped badly after Mr. Loveland's removal about 1851, and soon disappeared from the records. At various times Samuel C. Loveland was a member of the Governor's Council; Assistant Judge of Windsor County, and a Representative to the General Assembly. He was the author of a Greek Lexicon of the New Testament, and while a resident of Woodstock began the publication of a monthly magazine, "The Christian Repository," which was merged in "The Universalist."

An amusing anecdote told by an old resident seems to show that the social standing of the three churches was determined by the number of men attending services who were customary wearers of "stove pipe hats." The Congregational Church was of nine hat rank, the Universalist Church of five hat, and the Baptist Church of four hat rank.

During this same period Weston Island was another industrial center, while the section between the Island and the present Andover line contained some of the best and most prosperous farms in the township. Here some of the first settlements in Andover were made. Frederick Rogers built the first tavern in town on the site of the so-called Powers place, and here the first town meeting of Andover was held in 1780. Alvin Simons, another early settler and first town clerk of Weston, built the house later known as the Holt house, now owned by Robert Savory. He is said to have kept an inn there in the late 1700's. The first store in Andover was opened at the Island by Joseph Bullard about the same time, and gun powder was manufactured there in the

early part of the nineteenth century. Another historic house (now owned by Mrs. R. C. Thompson) when occupied by Timothy M. Frost was used to entertain fugitive slaves en route to freedom in Canada. This was also the boyhood home of Timothy Prescott Frost, D.D., one of the most noted Methodist preachers of his day.

In this same Island District the Methodist Church of Weston was born. A class was organized here as early as 1803. Later occasional meetings were held in the Island School House, usually in charge of the circuit rider for the district. Henry Martin, Lorenzo Pettengill, and Rev. Moses Adams were the most prominent men of this denomination in those early days. After a few years meetings were sometimes held in the Union Meeting House in the village. The Universalist Society had ceased to use this building before 1860, and the Methodists began to hold regular meetings there in 1865, their first settled minister being Rev. Joseph Enright. About 1870 they bought the upper part of the Union Meeting House, remodelled it and have continued to use it to the present time.

During the Civil War Weston sent 91 men out of a population of 932 to serve the Union cause. One native son, Henry G. Carter, grew to manhood in Texas and served in the Confederate Army as a Captain.

This drain of one tenth of its population, added to the heavy financial loss caused by the large bounties paid by the town to secure the needed volunteers during the latter part of the war were potent factors in the continued decline in both population and wealth.

Weston's intense interest in the progress of the war is illustrated by the story of the Burton flag, which is a treasured relic in the Farrar-Mansur house. Amos N. Burton, or "Square Burton" as he was commonly called, was one of three men in town to receive a Boston newspaper. When this paper carried news of a Union victory his daughter, Nancy, was sent scurrying to the top of a nearby hill where a special flag pole had been erected. There she raised the flag and thus conveyed the glad news to all within sight of the bit of color against the slope of Burton Mountain. The flag, 5 by 6 feet in size, with 31 stars arranged in the form of a star, was made by hand by this same Nancy Burton.

In 1836 Weston is said to have had over 5,000 sheep pastured on its hillsides, and Andover is credited with an equal number. Soon after 1840 the demand for wool gradually decreased, and sheep raising declined. Lewis D. Stilwell in his *Migration from Vermont* points out

that the towns with the largest numbers of sheep were the towns which lost the greatest numbers of their population and this was true here.

The advice, "Go West, Young Man," attributed to Horace Greeley, had been followed by residents of Weston and Andover for at least a decade before Horace was born, in fact since the late 1700's. Moses Warner, Eli, Jacob and Ezekiel Pease, James Keyes, Frederick Rogers, John Simons, Sr., and his sons, John, Jr., Dan, Ebenezer and Alvin, were among the more prominent of the settlers before 1780. Of these Keyes, Rogers, and the Simons brothers remained in town for varying periods of time, but by 1840 all had joined the migration to the west. Rogers, ancestor of the writer of this article, led the exodus and removed to Florida, N.Y., in the 1790's. Efforts to trace him beyond that point have been unsuccessful. Alvin Simons removed to St. Lawrence County, N.Y., and the other brothers probably settled there. The second generation of the Keyes family removed to Indiana in the 1830's.

Several members of the Dale, Foster, Cragin and Pease families removed to LaGrange and Grafton, Ohio, while John and Jonathan Foster settled at Akron, Ohio. Members of the Pease, Adams and Cragin families were early settlers in Strawberry Point and Dubuque, Iowa. Andover-born Alvin Adams removed from Weston to Dubuque about 1850, and became Judge of the Supreme Court of Iowa.

By far the largest number of Weston and Andover families migrated to Wisconsin. Abel and Ephraim Johnson, Joseph Stuart and Horace Burton settled in or near Black Earth; George Mansur in Neenah; Sewall Smith in East Troy, while a closely related group composed of Smiths, Burtons, Pierces, Dodges and Stickneys established settlements in Big Bend, Vernon and Dodge's Corners, Wisconsin.

Hiram Sanford Stevens (1832–1893) removed to what is now Tucson, Arizona in 1856, where he became a prominent political figure, and served as Territorial Delegate to the Forty-fourth and Forty-fifth Congresses.

But space will not permit an account of the scores of families which made the trek to the mid western states and thus contributed in no small measure to the decrease in Weston's population which continued until 1930.

Weston's history has been relatively uneventful, but typical of this section of Vermont. Its early settlers were of English and Scotch extraction, and this has remained the dominant racial stock.

The population, which showed such steady growth from 1776 to 1840, fluctuated downward from 1840 to 1930. This was not peculiar to Weston, but characteristic of the New England hill towns. Some of the causes of this rise and fall in population have been indicated in this brief sketch.

A 10% increase shown in the 1940 census was due to an influx of residents drawn by the handicrafts, arts and recreational opportunities of the new Weston. The pattern has been set, and the town seems destined to become the model of a new order of country living. The success or failure of this venture will depend largely on continued understanding and co-operation between the groups representing the old time families and the newer comers. Thus far the results have been gratifying.

The Weston Revival

ONE HUNDRED YEARS LATER

By VREST ORTON

FROM 1840–1850, when Weston reached its 19th Century apotheosis in population and economic activity, as told by Raymond Taylor, the town began a long and gradual decline to a level where, a century later, the population stood at some 400 souls. And as a contrast to the peak of earlier commercial activity, in 1934 Weston Village had one store and two small woodworking shops. On the backbone of the Green Mountains, Weston had duplicated the trend of emigration and decline which so many other small isolated settlements in the back mountain areas had experienced in these hundred years. The whirlwind which had been but the size of a man's hand at the beginning of the industrial revolution in New England had been reaped. The mill towns of southern New England and the open spaces of the more exciting and adventurous west, had enticed the young, the ambitious, and the more enterprising souls.

In 1934 what is now the Weston Playhouse was an abandoned Congregational Church which stood as a good example of the provincial wooden Gothic architecture of the last quarter of the 19th Century. What is now the Farrar-Mansur Museum was an abandoned unpainted dwelling house, with decrepit doors and windows. Next to the Playhouse stood an eighteen-room structure which had once been an inn, but had now become a tenement house for several families. On the southern periphery of the village green was a cluster of old barns detached from a farm house and unused except for a rabbit warren in the cellar. Next to these stood a two and one-half storey building, the first floor housing some of the records of the town clerk's office and the top floor occupied as a tenement. Crossing the bridge over the Wantastiquet River into the old Charlestown District one came, within a block of the bridge, to a series of barns, old mills, sheds, and one or

two houses which, built over the brook, completely covered the water. Across the road on the hill stood what is now The Church on the Hill, but then was the seldom used building which had been bought some years before by the local Grange.

All this only briefly delineates the Weston of 1934. But it was not a condition due to the personal inadequacies of the inhabitants so much as it was to larger and more potent economical and social factors beyond their control. The world had changed.

There was even then one man, however, who, born and reared in Weston, was determined to do something about restoring Weston to the peak it had reached about 100 years before. Raymond Taylor, the postmaster, had long been interested in genealogy and local history and had also been working for many years on a definite "History of Weston," which will be published some day. He supplied the original impetus for the revival, and has since been a leading figure in the good work.

Another man whose altruistic interest in Weston has been implemented by good works was Lewis Parkhurst of Winchester, Mass. Senator Parkhurst, who for many years was chairman of the board of Ginn and Co., Boston publishers, and senior trustee of Dartmouth College, began his career as a young school teacher over 60 years ago in Weston. Here he married Miss Emma Wilder, whose father was a Windsor County judge.

Lewis Parkhurst could look back in his own experience to the days when Weston had been a more thriving and enterprising community. He determined, at Raymond Taylor's suggestion, to aid the Weston revival.

He first purchased all of the property in the Charlestown District described in a previous paragraph. He then caused the structures to be razed and, moving one of the best houses to the hill above, he completely cleared the area around the falls and brook which had been hidden for so many years. In place of the buildings, he built appropriate stone walls along the brook's banks, and also two stone dams, creating two waterfalls and a small pond. Grading the center of the property and building a road, he turned this region into the beautiful area it is today.

The Church on the Hill he also repaired and restored. It was his desire that Weston should have a non-denominational meeting house for all the people. With the suggestion that the development of Weston would some day call for a liberal church, he presented the completely

restored and rebuilt church building to the people on Old Home Day in 1938.

The people of Weston then organized as the Community Church. The first pastor was the Reverend George E. Beach whose tenure extended to the year 1941. Since that time the Community Church has attracted outstanding metropolitan preachers who summer in the vicinity and preach here during the season. To implement Lewis Parkhurst's ideal for a living non-denominational church in Weston, plans are now afoot to make the Community Church a year round organization with a permanent pastor.

Moving down the hill and back across the bridge south of the Common, Senator Parkhurst purchased the property where the barns and the two-storey house had stood and there, after a proper job of grading, he had built an authentic slant-roof 18th Century house for the use of the town of Weston as offices of the town clerk, the board of selectmen, and other town officials. This building, designed by Raymond F. Austin, was dedicated in 1942.

Senator Parkhurst's other benefactions to the town included a plot south of this building which he presented to the town for the use of the school children as a playground.

It was also Lewis Parkhurst who was responsible for the inauguration of the Weston Trout Club. To utilize the water from the famous bubbling spring on the hill west of the village, a dam was erected increasing the size of the small pond located on the spot and a sizable lake was created. The Weston Trout Club was established first as an organization of local citizens, later as one of members outside of Weston, to stock the waters with trout. Later a clubhouse was erected and over the years several other houses were built by members and others so that today there is a modest settlement around this beautiful lake several hundred feet above the village.

Another segment of Weston contemporary history should be recorded as one of the first sources of national attention that the village achieved. In 1935 this writer, who had come to Weston in 1934, established in partnership with John Lowell Pratt, The Countryman Press. This was a book publishing house as well as an actual printing office. Printing and typographic designing were done here for New York publishers, and for several universities.

Here for four years The Countryman Press issued books which won considerable literary acclaim. Published in Weston and bearing a Weston imprint, the volumes were sold to individuals throughout

the country by mail. Among its publications was the now famous "The Devil and Daniel Webster" by Stephen Vincent Benét and another one of Mr. Benét's rare stories entitled "Johnny Pye and the Fool Killer." Its limited edition series, of which these two were part, also included books by Frederic Van de Water, of Brattleboro; the well known American poet Edgar Lee Masters; and the Vermont historian Dana Doten, whose book, "The Art of Bundling," was the first on that interesting custom since the Reverend Timothy Styles had touched upon it 100 years before. The Countryman Press also issued a series of books on country life of which "The Country Dance Book," "The Country Craft Book," "The Country Cook Book" and "The Country Rod and Gun Book" were four.

In 1939, The Countryman Press was sold to John Lowell Pratt who removed it to New York City.

No history of the Weston revival can omit the constant interest in the town of Senator Flanders of Springfield. This nationally known industrialist and authority on pragmatic economics became interested in Weston in 1934, and has made substantial contributions, both of time and money. His unique genius in the field of socio-economic ideas has given new impetus and leadership to men like Orton and Taylor, and has provided a background of profound and long-term meaning to the many obvious physical changes in Weston since 1934.

Another bit of local history which should be set down is the story of the Weston Common. Originally it was but a frog pond in front of Captain Farrar's enterprising tavern on the Post Road. Cattails grew around it and boys used to catch frogs in it. Two boys, during the Civil War, launched a sap pan upon the pond and reacted, in miniature, some of the now famous naval engagements of the conflict. Through what would now be the middle of the Common ran the highway. As the years went on, the road kept inching to the wood yard on the west where people stored and sawed fire wood, until eventually a considerable area of ground was left in the middle of the village.

The heirs of Captain Farrar who owned the land occupied by the pond (which is pictured on one of Roy William's murals in the Farrar Mansur House) signed off their rights to this area and there was created, by a special act of the Vermont General Assembly in 1886, the Farrar Park Association. This organization consisted of a self-perpetuating board of nine women and so consists today. Thus the so-called Common or more properly the Farrar Park is owned, not by the town of Weston, but by nine women. It is their object to keep the Common

maintained, but in the flood of 1938 the damages were too great to be completely repaired. In 1946 a new campaign was inaugurated to regrade and restore the Common so that it would once again be the typical close-cropped lawn that was once the boast of all New England villages. Mrs. Vrest Orton is president of the Farrar Park Association.

Weston has always considered itself fortunate that it lies adjacent to the Green Mountain National Forest, one of the largest areas of untracked wilderness in Vermont. The first work on this area was begun in 1933 when, under President Roosevelt's conservation program, the Civilian Conservation Corps established the 133rd Company at Weston about five miles north of the village. Lt. J. K. Reilly, U.S.N., was the first commanding officer and he was followed by Captains Wallace Grover, C. P. Griswold, and Irving Thurston, and First Lts. J. H. Conway and W. W. Ball. The first superintendent was a well known Vermonter, Lafayette Lyons of Bennington, who was responsible for a great deal of the important construction work. This site was known as the West River Forest Camp, and some 200 young men built a large share of the scenic fifteen mile road across the area to Danby, the recreation area at Hapgood Pond, and the picnic area in the Greendale section above Weston. The camp was later abandoned.

* * *

The effect of the new activity in Weston has been most rewarding in the development of new skills and occupations among some of the people who were born and have always lived in the village. An outstanding example is the contracting business of Ellwood Jenson, and the chair craft work of Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Peck. Jenson has built an enterprising contracting business and has the distinction of being the first man in town to build a completely modern house. This interesting structure in the rolling hills of Vermont was erected on Piper Hill outside the village, and is in the tradition of modern structures employing solar heat and other devices inherent in this type of architecture. The fact that a young local boy without outside training could develop into a modern builder of the region is an interesting index to what the impetus of new ideas and activity is doing to the town.

Ernest Peck for many years was the rural mail carrier of the town. Upon his retirement in 1944 he turned his hobby into a vocation and is now supplying The Vermont Country Store and others with a line of handmade chairs and stools which he not only makes in his own

shop but also weaves the cane and rush seats. His wife has also developed a considerable enterprise in stenciling and redecoration.

* * *

When the casual visitor to Weston village has seen the several exhibits of the past for which Weston has become famous, it is extremely likely that he may go away without sensing the innate purpose of what has actually begun to happen here in this village as a result of the Weston revival.

It has taken American industry a long time to come upon the truth about industry's greatest and most valuable asset. Men like Senator Ralph E. Flanders are in the vanguard of this new movement to make American business realize that from now on its most valuable asset is the human one. The technological development of industry as a process of manufacturing has been all too rapid, since the Industrial Revolution, for the human mind and heart to keep pace. Men who work in industry, small or big, are emotionally far behind the technological development of the machines. Thinkers in this field are concerned with this problem of how human development may catch up with the technological.

Like any other basic truth about the relation of man to society, this new truth is based upon a complete understanding of the past. No one denies that today the rapid development of the machine, as exemplified in mass production, has taken from the men running these machines one of the most important assets of life itself, which is the pride and sense of personal accomplishment. The problem, therefore, that has concerned the thinkers in this field, has been how to give workers this sense of accomplishment without demolishing the production line and going back to the 18th Century of individual craftsmanship.

Only in the last year or two has the light begun to dawn and now it is being realized that man has lost something perhaps equally as important as that pride of personal accomplishment.

This is his loss of social identity.

In the craft period, and even when machine industry was young, the highly skilled artisans and mechanics were able to assume definite positions in the society of the small communities in which they lived. Men were looked up to as master carpenters, tool-makers, coppersmiths, blacksmiths, weavers, cabinet makers, etc. Today that social identity has almost vanished. The worker for the most part today lives in a de-personalized urban area, and has lost his identity in the large factory. The resulting social insecurity gives clear evidence that this

is what he lacks more than any other factor in his relationships with his fellow men. Thus, the paramount problem today is how to recapture a new and more valid social identity and personal integrity for the man doing work, so that he can regain his standing in society and enjoy a sense of pride in this standing.

It is felt by those who sense this new industrial philosophy that probably the one outstanding solution to the problem is further decentralization of industry whereby the worker can once again, by living in a small community, regain his feelings of being part of a community, as well as a pride in being master of a certain craft even though it may be carried on in a sizable shop or small factory.

The amazing record of supplying the United Nations fighting forces with war matériel during the recent war was based largely on the tremendous subcontracting structure which the armed forces of the United States caused American industry to establish. This subcontracting structure demonstrated beyond cavil that there is no need any longer for all industry to be centralized in unlivable, inefficient and vast urban industrial areas. The experience was an educational one for industry and has now indicated that decentralization can be successful in peace as well as in war.

These are the philosophical concepts of a few of the men interested in the Weston revival. These are the imponderable and hidden values and ideas which the visitor to this village will probably not perceive and, therefore, they bear recording. If the end product of the development of small enterprise in Weston, as an example to other forsaken communities, is a new understanding and demonstration of man's social identity in his community, then the value and lasting imprint of this movement cannot be gainsaid.

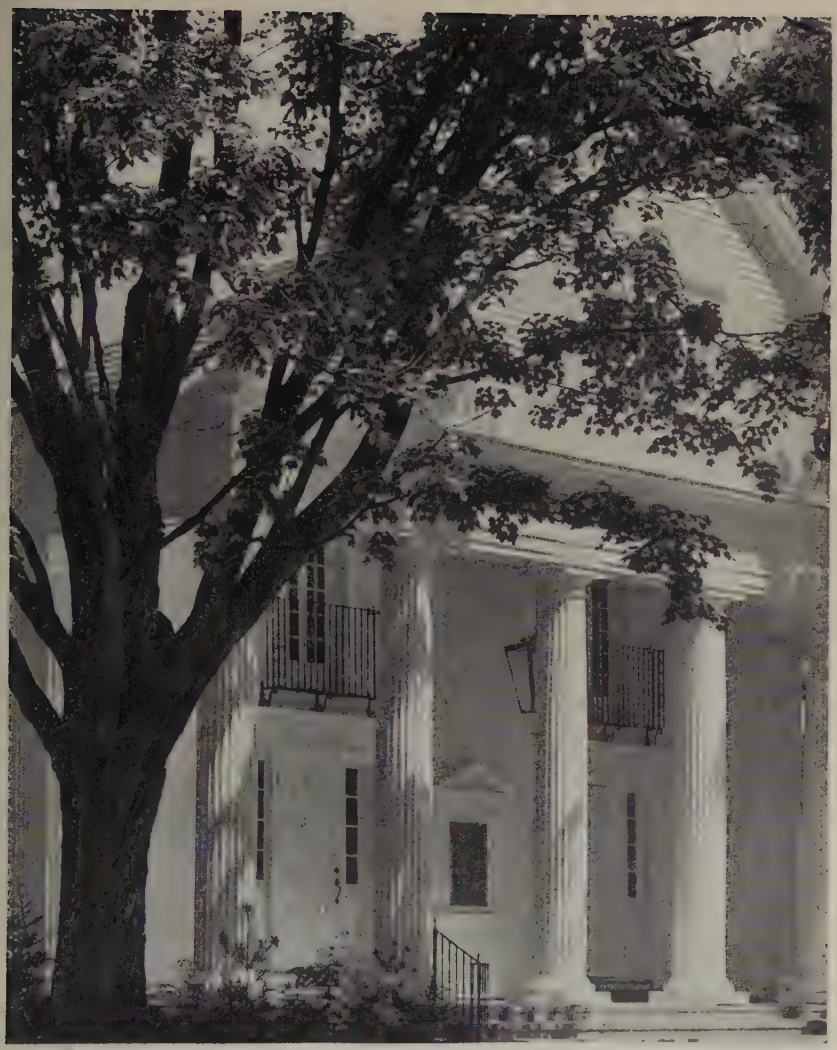
Weston in Pictures

CHURCH ON THE HILL

FARRAR-MANSUR TAVERN BEFORE RESTORATION

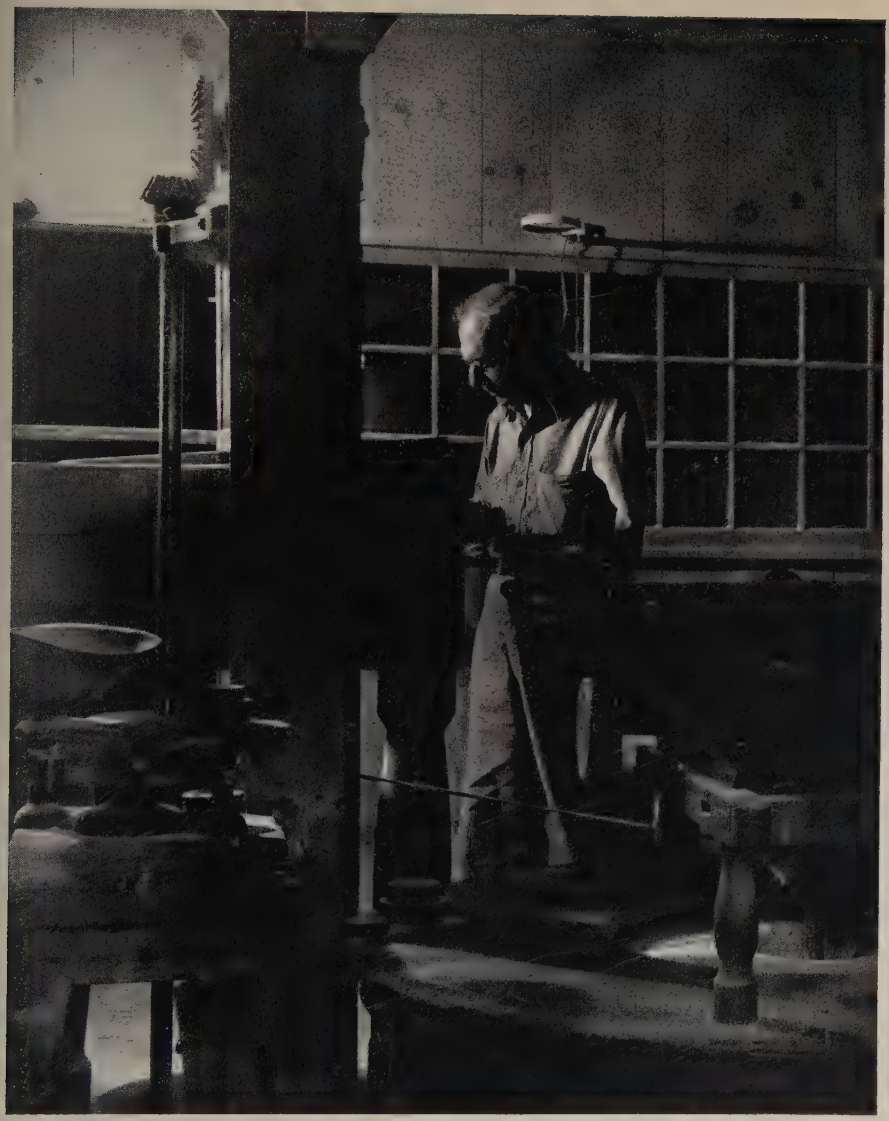
INSIDE THE VERMONT COUNTRY STORE

SOME OF THE WESTON PLAYERS



WESTON PLAYHOUSE

THE VERMONT GUILD OF OLDTIME CRAFTS AND INDUSTRIES



GARDNER L. ORTON GRINDS THE WHOLE-GRAIN PRODUCTS
OF THE VERMONT GUILD

STEVEN HALL'S GAY HAND-PAINTED WOODEN WARE IS SOLD IN METROPOLITAN DEPARTMENT STORES AS WELL AS IN WESTON

Give Us This Day . . .

THE DAILY SUSTENANCE OF WESTON

By BAIRD HALL

PEOPLE made a good living in Weston a hundred years ago. People make a good living in Weston now.

Nice visitors to Vermont, with surprising regularity, say, "I'd certainly like to move right up here and live—if there were any way for me to eat." This naive admixture of flattery and rudeness, addressed to a well-fed Westonian, has the kind of humor Vermonters most enjoy—without smiling. A Vermonter never has known that deep uneasy insecurity which so obviously haunts even the most opulent urban visitor.

Visitors are *very* welcome in Weston, and a considerable number do find their way in over the mountains and unpaved roads to this neat, rather sedate little village. But tourists are not an important factor in Weston economy. The Weston Playhouse (summer theatre) and the Farrar-Mansur House (American museum) are both owned by the Weston Community Club, a non-profit organization. The famous Vermont Guild of Old-Time Crafts and Industries is also a non-profit organization. Of course Nancy Baird's local village inn and Parham Parkhurst's general store are especially busy during summer holidays and winter skiing. And visitors enjoy Vrest Orton's Vermont Country Store, the small shop in Baird & Steven Hall's woodworking-decorative painting establishment, and the woodcarving shop of Tom Fitzsimmons. But the Vermont Country Store is headquarters of a national mailorder business and the handcraft industries of the Halls and of Fitzsimmons are primarily wholesale manufactories rather than gift shops for tourists.

The basis of Weston economy today, as it has always been, is farming and lumbering and small industry and local business. There are fewer people here than there were in the last century, when small farming and small business were more generally popular. But the names still

most prominent in Weston affairs are the old names, and Weston farming and business are decidedly popular with the folk who are doing it.

Milk and eggs are the major farm exports. Eighteen farms, in this town of 400 population, ship these products wholesale to outside markets. It would be a serious miscalculation, however, to gauge local agriculture by these exports. Quantities of beef, veal, pork, lamb, chicken, vegetables, dairy products, maple sugar and fruit do *not* go out—because they get eaten in Weston. Farming for local sale or swap, and subsistence farming are basic to Weston economy and, of course, a basic reason Vermonters enjoy freedom from both want and fear. Nine out of every ten families in Weston produce food. How much or little each family produces is flexibly adjusted to conditions, within the household or in the general economy. High prices or low, abundance or scarcity, good times or bad, Westonians do eat.

And Weston farmers grow trees. Most of the lumber logs and pulpwood trucked out to mills and paper plants are products of the many farms rather than specialized lumbering. Again, local marketing and swap and subsistence are important factors. The lumber for a man's own barn and firewood for the schoolhouses are, in Weston, home-grown products.

The clock on the old Parish Meeting & Town House is beloved of the villagers, but everyone in fact sets his watch by The Company whistle. This H. C. Jaquith Company, operated by the Gabert families, is Weston's largest single industrial enterprise. The Company employs some thirty men, owns and operates timber lands, sells lumber, even does some sugaring, but its primary business and export is chair turning.

Woodworking is a natural industry for this community and it ranges from these chair turnings by The Company, Waldron's bowl turning shop, and Clyde Tuttle's lawn chairs, down to the before mentioned handcrafters whose carved and gaily decorated spoonracks, spice-cabinets, trays and such go out to smart shops from Maine to California.

Raymond Austin is a Weston industry in himself, because he and his men have designed, built, remodelled, restored and otherwise maintained so many of the buildings, new and old, which are Weston today. The word "old" is important. In a town where the building trades have been very active for these last fifteen years one might expect the slick new or over-charmingly "restored" look which has so changed the face of many a New England village. Weston's charm has been

maintained rather than "restored." It looks and is a real town, not a nostalgic stage set. And Austin's skill as a designer is a major factor here aesthetically as his contracting business is a factor economically.

But the Weston building trades range from Austin's considerable scope down to Lonny Fuller's individual and mastering ability to lay you up a fine wall when he's done haying, or Sam Waite's uncanny skill with a stopped spring line as soon as he comes in from his RFD route. So here again it is essential to note that carpentry, plumbing, masonry and electrical work in Weston are not what might appear on a Government Survey of Building Trades. The men who, as individuals or part time, carry on these trades in Weston are not quaint incidents but are in sum the largest part of the industry, vital to local economy and to local independence of spirit.

The "teaming" of 1850 is of course called trucking now and Fred Sporbert, Winfield DuBois, Einar Fabricius and Otis Hart operate trucking services—which does not mean they can't still handle a team when they want to. There are plenty of other teamsters, too, who can and do snake logs off Weston mountain sides quite as expertly as did their fathers off the same mountain sides.

Times have changed in Weston, but how much? Is it perhaps true that the changes in this economy have been more superficial than basic?

A precise definition of this idea is provided by Parkhurst's Store. Everything else is provided by The Store, so why not a precise definition? There is nothing old fashioned in the appearance of The Store. It is as clean and well lit as an urban super-market. The bright, price-marked rows of canned goods and packages on the shelves, the tempting "stack" displays, all are quite in the modern tradition. The place is attractive and large. It has to be very large. Because here Parham Parkhurst and Harry Simonds are keeping store for a community in vociferous need of the newest self-popping breakfast cereal, a good cheap workshirt, a bottle of DDT, a bottle of coke, cake flour, a scythe stone, birthday candles, a pair of 3″ x 1″ steel butts, two packages of frozen strawberries, and "say, Parham, can I use your phone a minute?"

In equipment, display and merchandise, Parkhurst's is much changed from any general store of the 1850's. But it *is* a general store, and the services rendered are basically unchanged through a hundred years. These services are not merely variety of stock. The social importance of this town meeting place is, perhaps, not pertinent to this

article. But the amount of general business transacted in the comfortable chairs and on the front steps makes The Store, in serious fact, an office building. And The Store is a bank. Cash moves *to* The Store from outside banks for the cashing of local checks. The Store's handling of credits is a stabilizing factor in local economy, the extent of which will never be publicized and never forgotten by appreciative Westonians.

Across from Parkhurst's, The Vermont Country Store is, deliberately, a museum—a general store of the past century, very carefully *not* changed. The museum aspects of The Country Store are discussed elsewhere in this issue. From the economic standpoint, this business is primarily important as a most successful, nationwide mailorder outlet —for products of local crafts and industries as well as good and interesting items collected by the Orton brothers from everywhere. Twice each year The Vermont Country Store sends out its seasonal catalog by the hundred thousands. "Across-the-counter sales" alone, however, would constitute a satisfactory business. Nor is this trade exclusively with tourists.

"I've sold more herb vinegar and Romanoff caviar to our own folks than to visitors," remarked Paul Orton.

Apparently Westonians not only eat, but eat caviar.

The Weston Inn, last but not least of the town's classifiable businesses, is, like Parkhurst's Store, an example of old and new. "Modernized" at intervals, most recently in 1945, the Inn has bathrooms and rockwool insulation and central heat. But it is still the little village inn. And no matter how rushed with "before-the-theatre" diners, neither Prop. Nancy Baird nor the famous Lucy Honebon in her kitchen is in any danger of forgetting that special birthday cake for Susie down the street.

"Classifiable business."

When the list is made, something is missing—the picture is not complete—the statement is *not* the sum total of Weston's economy. In every catagory—farming and lumbering and industry and business —it has been necessary to refer to marginal activities. There are all those individuals, part-time or occasional workers at a trade. And it will be difficult for any urban reader, accustomed to specialized society, fully to grasp this situation.

Marginal activities are the *controlling element* in the business of making a living in Weston. George Marshall is a master painter. He is Weston's only classifiable painter. He does as much as he can. Obviously

most of Weston's painting must be done by others—often with a plea to George to "get in to draw the sash, maybe, huh?"

Westonians do not automatically call upon a specialist, whether to fix the plumbing or get a haircut. If a car won't start, they probably call Ellwood Jensen away from a chimney he's laying. An inquirer is not necessarily directed to The Store for potatoes nor even to the Inn for a night's lodging.

It would be very hard to guess just how much of Weston's business is done by folks who are not in the business. But it is easy to know that "helping out," swap, and subsistence work constitute the hard core of Weston economy. Weston was not a self-sufficient community a hundred years ago. Weston is not a self-sufficient community today. The point, however, is that today, as a hundred years ago, Westonians can and do turn their hands to whatever is needed for survival. They have not become specialists. They have not lost the knack of flexibility. No Westonian is ever afraid of losing his job. Neither an angry boss nor an Iowa corncrop failure can strike terror into his heart. He will earn his livelihood, if not one way then another. Food, shelter and fuel he can provide for himself and his family—today as a hundred years ago. He has the means and he has the "know how" and he has his neighbors to carry him past personal emergencies.

Weston is not self-sufficient but, in a pinch, it *could* be. And the comfortable certainty of this has always been the fundamental of local economy. Whether Weston makes bowls or buttons, ships milk or wool, eats Hershey bars or sugar-on-snow—all these are flexible matters and superficial as compared to the constant. People made a good living in Weston a hundred years ago. People make a good living in Weston now.

And they like it.

VERMONT GUILD OF OLDTIME CRAFTS AND INDUSTRIES

The Vermont Guild

OF OLDTIME CRAFTS AND INDUSTRIES

By PAUL L. ORTON

IT must be recorded that the Vermont Guild of Oldtime Crafts and Industries did not spring into full bloom at its inception in 1936. Frank Mansur, a native of Weston, had returned some years before from Detroit (where he had been superintendent of a machine tool factory) and set to work in the woodworking shop he had inherited from his father. About forty years before this, when Mansur had worked as a foreman in Brown and Sharpe of Providence, R.I., three of his several apprentices had been Clayton R. Burt, later chairman of the board of Niles, Bement and Pond, an affiliate of Pratt and Whitney of Hartford, Conn.; Simon MacKay, vice-president of the Union Twist Drill of Athol, Mass.; and Ralph E. Flanders, chairman of the board of Jones and Lamson Machine Tool Co., Springfield, Vermont, and now United States Senator from Vermont.

Due to ill health Mansur was unable to carry on his Weston shop, so Senator Flanders and friends got together in 1936 and purchased Mansur's sawmill and water rights on the Wantastiquet River. With this property on their hands, the group realized that they had to do something useful with it. From this need arose the idea of establishing an organization to promote, by example and precept, the growth of village industries in Vermont, and to bring back some of the nearly lost skills of the early days.

Thus it was that fourteen men incorporated the non-profit organization, "The Vermont Guild of Oldtime Crafts and Industries," and held the first meeting on 7 August 1936 at Weston. Among the original incorporators were Senator Flanders; Laurence H. Walker and Vrest Orton of Weston; Ralph E. Boothby of New Orleans, and Samuel R. Ogden of Landgrove. A set of by-laws was adopted and a board of trustees was elected at that meeting. Senator Flanders was elected chairman and Laurence H. Walker, a school teacher, was

elected secretary, later becoming secretary and treasurer. There were established two classes of memberships, annual members who contributed $2.00 a year, and life members who contributed $100.00. In the first year the following contributed $100.00 each and became life members:—Ralph E. Flanders; Redfield Proctor, Proctor, Vt.; Mrs. Charles M. Swift, Ferrisburg, Vt.; Joseph Winterbotham, Burlington; Miss Shirley Farr, Brandon; John C. Orcutt and J. Watson Webb of New York City; Paul Mellon of Pittsburgh; Lewis N. Wiggins, Northampton, Mass.; Miss Sarah Bailey, Scarsdale, N.Y.; W. S. Davenport, Rochester, N.Y.; Henry D. Sharpe and William D. Viall, both of Providence, R.I.

In 1939, Vrest Orton was elected secretary and treasurer and has held that position to the present time. In 1940 a revised set of by-laws was adopted at the annual meeting on August 14th.

Mansur's one-storey woodworking mill which the organization had purchased had been built about the year 1900 to replace the original two and one-half storey mill which had, in 1899, burned to the ground. Since the 1900 structure was in no sense a historical one, plans were soon made to reconstruct, on the same site, the original mill which had been built late in the 18th Century.

Up to 1938, the 1900 one-storey building was used for an exhibit of early tools and industrial apparatus which had been presented by various persons, such as the Putney (Vt.) Up-And-Down Sawmill, or which had been purchased, as in the case of the 150-year-old French Buhr stone grist mill. In 1938, however, major damage was done to the dam and property by the flood and hurricane of that autumn, and for some months repair jobs were undertaken by local carpenters. But in late 1939 a competent New York architect, Howard Schultz, was employed and from his plans, looking ahead for twenty years, new work was begun under the direction of John Erickson of Shushan, New York. The erection of a two and one-half storey building, to duplicate as nearly as possible the original 18th Century mill structure, was the first step in this program.

The several old barns then standing south of the Common were taken apart and the hand-hewn dimensional timbers and weathered boards were used in the new building. Erickson, a master shipcarpenter in Finland, was able to construct the entire building in the old-fashioned manner. The hand-hewn timbers were pegged together by wooden dowels so that the building, while assembled in the

20th Century, was actually, in material and workmanship, an 18th Century edifice.

During this time Senator Flanders made the major contributions to meet the growing costs, not only for this building but for the work of the organization. The balance of the funds was raised by Vrest Orton from about 100 people in Vermont and elsewhere. In 1941, for example, May Bryant Fullam and William J. Bryant of Springfield contributed funds for the erection of a room as a memorial to Dr. William N. Bryant (1851–1929), one of the first physicians in the vicinity.

Up to this time the Vermont Guild operated as an eleemosynary institution. The buildings, in addition to the newly built mill, included a two-storey blacksmith shop in which had been set up the tin and coppersmith equipment also purchased from Frank Mansur. While the Guild began to be visited by out of state tourists and a few Vermonters, the interest at this time was mainly in the stationary museum exhibits of craft tools and early machinery.

There were, to give a brief indication of the variety of the historical archive, such items as the Barton Carding Mill, one of the first set up in Vermont, a dozen hand-made domestic looms, six kinds of wooden cheese presses, all kinds of wool and flax spinning wheels, a flax-break, a shingle throw and bench, early moulding planes for hand work, a niddy-noddy, a hand winnower, an early machine lathe, and shingle machine, buttermakers, and many small hand tools long since passed from daily use. Several machines which Frank Mansur had invented had been purchased for the permanent exhibit.

It was about this time, however, that a new idea arose as to the future function and operation of the Vermont Guild. Being largely backed by Vermont businessmen like Senator Flanders, Joseph Winterbotham, and F. W. Shepardson and others, it was only natural that they should be interested in a self-liquidating project. To bring this about, the stone grist mill was set to work grinding corn. Realizing that little if any income would accrue from the sale of corn meal to the local population, Vrest Orton undertook to establish a national mail order business. This was begun in 1940 and has developed to the point where today over 15,000 people throughout the United States have used Vermont Guild stone ground germ-content products. To the wholegrain corn meal were later added wheat, rye and other stone-ground grains, as well as new trade-marked products such as "muffin meal," and "samp

cereal," so that now ten products are ground on this same grist mill, powered by the original water wheel.

To implement the plan for making the Guild self-liquidating, the other projects outlined for development were: (a) Hand-weaving on the 18th Century domestic looms which the Guild had in its museum. (b) Metal work to employ the blacksmith's and tin-smith's shop and equipment. (c) Woodworking, to make use of the lathes, saws and other equipment in the museum. (d) Pottery, to bring back the use of the Bennington, Vermont clay deposits which had been the base of the most widely known pottery in Colonial times.

The hand-weaving was established in 1939 by the employment of a weaving teacher under the Smith-Hughes Act by which the State Board of Education assisted the Guild in the teaching of weaving. During that and subsequent summers until the war, classes were held. In 1941 the general weaving was replaced by the weaving of the newly designed Vermont Guild tweeds. These cloths were woven from virgin wool imported from Scotland, probably the first time a tweed of this character had been made on hand looms in this part of the country.

At the beginning of the Second World War, Ralph Flanders was made president of the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston, and Vrest Orton was called to Washington as public relations counsel for the War Department. During this period, Gardner L. Orton, father of Vrest and of this writer, took over the operation of the grist mill and materially enlarged the operations. Upon the return of Senator Flanders and Vrest Orton late in 1945, new plans were drawn up for the Vermont Guild and these were put into motion in the fall of that year. It was seen that the Vermont Guild, in addition to keeping alive its museum, could best promote in Vermont the successful creation and development of small industries producing high quality products, by making successful its own operation as a small industry producing high quality goods. To implement this plan it was decided to bring competent war veterans to Weston, and David Seeley of Philadelphia was the first. He was hired to take charge of the weaving business and thus weaving became a self-contained village industry in which the same Vermont Guild hand woven tweeds were turned out.

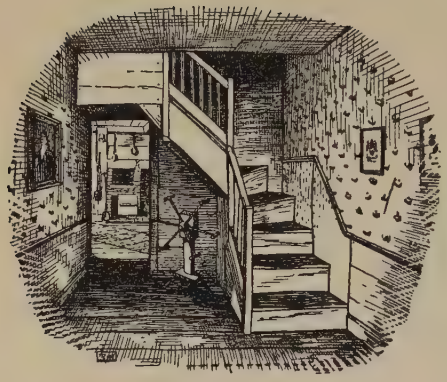
Coincidental with the inauguration of this plan, Vrest Orton set up the Vermont Country Store south of the Common. Since he was unable longer to contribute as much of his time to the Vermont Guild as

formerly, the Vermont Guild made the Vermont Country Store its sales agent.

In the winter of 1946 plans were undertaken to bring to Weston more war veterans, one of whom would re-establish and place on a self-liquidating basis the metal shop, and another the woodworking shop. Thus it left one of the five major projects, namely the pottery, to await the arrival of the right person to bring it to life.

In the Guild's present fiscal year, 1946–1947, the following Board of Trustees was elected: Harold J. Adams, lawyer, Buffalo, N.Y., summer home in Peru, Vt.; Ralph E. Flanders, U. S. Senator from Vermont, Springfield, Vt.; J. Chester Hutchinson, selectman, Weston, Vt.; Gustav May, clock-maker, Weston, Vt.; Samuel R. Ogden, author and blacksmith, Landgrove, Vt.; Vrest Orton, author and merchant, treasurer and secretary, Weston, Vt.; G. L. Orton, local manager of our grist-mill, Weston, Vt.; Roy L. Patrick, chairman, Rock of Ages Corp., Burlington, Vt.; F. W. Shepardson, president Maltex Co., Burlington, Vt.; Joseph Winterbotham, chairman, Vt. Industrial Agriculture Commission, Burlington, Vt.; Clifton W. Follansbee, Publicity Director, John Hancock Insurance Co., Boston, Mass.

The Vermont Guild began as a local organization of a few men with an altruistic purpose. Today, ten years later, it has grown to a nationally known organization which has had extensive recognition in magazine and newspaper articles. Its purpose is still to show, by example alone, what can be done to establish a sound economic basis for the revival of early Vermont skills and quality production, commonly heretofore considered buried in the dusty oblivion of the past.



The Farrar-Mansur House

WESTON'S OLD TAVERN MUSEUM

By STEVEN AGNES HALL

IT is amazing to find a museum in a village with a population of 460. It is even more amazing to find a museum of such vital and personal interest to those 460 people. For Weston's museum is not only a museum of Vermont Americana, but an historical archive of Weston as a community.

The purpose of the old Tavern museum is to bring together early furniture, utensils, tools, documents,—objects and records that belonged to the men and women who settled Weston and its valley. It becomes therefore not just a collection of antiques, but a collection of objects whose combined history is in large part the history of Weston.

The collection started many years before there was a roof for its collective head. In 1916 Miss Grace Gilmore, the retiring postmistress of Weston, was moving away from the village. Among her possessions were a number of things which had belonged to her family and in Weston for generations. She did not want to take them with her, she did not in fact know what to do with them. Raymond Taylor, who was taking over her duties as postmaster, suggested that she leave them with him as a nucleus of a possible museum for local Weston antiques. These pieces were the beginning of a collection to which Mr. Taylor, himself a member of an old Weston family and antiquarian, added from time to time.

In 1922 the old Congregational Church which had not been in use since 1913, was deeded to the Weston Community Club and made into an entertainment hall. A room on the second floor of this building was turned over to the collection and remodelled as a fitting background through the generous gift of Miss Sarah Bertha Davenport.

Ten years later, Frank Mansur, who had been interested in the project from the beginning, deeded to the Community Club for a

museum, the Farrar Tavern, his old family homestead. This was exceedingly appropriate for the purpose. One of the earliest buildings in Weston, it was built in 1797 by Captain Oliver Farrar for a tavern. It was occupied in its early history by several Weston families, but in 1857 it came into the possession of the Mansur family and was used for four generations by that family as a residence.

This was authentic background for the growing collection of Westoniana. But the Community Club was faced with the financial problem of restoring and repairing the building which had been unused for some years. The Club was helped by donations from interested people, most of them descendants of early Weston families. Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Parkhurst were generous in their support, as was Mrs. Henry Clark Acker. Mrs. Elizabeth Miller, a descendant of Oliver Farrar who built the house, financed the restoration of the lovely big ballroom. The Willis Smith family paid for the restoration of a room as a memorial to Kendall Smith and the room is filled with heirlooms of that family and the connected families of Cone and Sweetland.

But the project needed more than financial support. Members of the Community Club gave dances, entertainments, anything that would raise money. Frank Mansur, who remembered the house as it was in his grandfather's time, was of invaluable assistance in planning its restoration. Other townspeople like Ralph Boothby, Raymond Austin, Mrs. Maude Bryant and Roy Williams, gave generously of their time and interest.

Little by little as funds and time were available, the old house took shape. It was, thanks to the good taste and the good sense of the group in charge, never "prettied" up, but has retained all of its rugged simplicity and character. With its huge panelled kitchen, its built-in cupboard and seven fireplaces, its taproom and bar, its ballroom and snug formal parlor with sliding blinds, it is a perfect example of its period and of great interest in itself.

There is nothing of the formal museum about the house. It is merely a fine old building filled with things that belong there. The kitchen houses the cooking utensils, the dishes, the tables and chairs that the early settlers used. Here is the clock reel used by Lois Walker Mansur, the first of this family to be mistress of the house. The woven coverlet on the wall was spun by Polly Mansur on the large wheel that now stands again in her kitchen. The rockee, or combination rocking-chair and cradle, that now stands in front of a fireplace, belonged to the Austin family who settled in Weston in 1800. Here are

the tools and utensils that make a graphic story of how Weston's forefathers lived.

The tin chandelier for eight candles that hangs in the taproom was made by Henry Kimball, Weston's first tinsmith. The table underneath it was made about 1820 by Benjamin Patch who fed a family of fourteen around it. The ladder-back chair in the prim little parlor belonged to Laura Reed Bolster, a great grandmother of Raymond Taylor. A chair in the library belonged to James Taylor who lived in the house for ten years. And so it goes through the house.

There are few rare pieces to be found there, but there are few without personal interest to Westonians. You may find in an antique shop a mahogany secretary as fine and as old as the one in the Farrar-Mansur house, but the latter was made by Joshua Baldwin a local cabinetmaker, and Joshua was the husband of Mary Farrar, who was born in this house in 1798, the daughter of Oliver Farrar.

The early American portraits that hang on the wall of the house are of interest not just because they are early American portraits, but because they portray people who lived in Weston. The portraits of Asa and Addison Gilmore hang in the hall. Elsewhere in the house you will find the sword Asa carried in the Civil War and other relics of this family. Several families prominent in Weston today claim a common ancestor in Prudence Jewett Richardson whose portrait hangs in the ktchen.

The library, which was restored by members of the Spaulding, Bolster, Shattuck, Taylor families, houses the records and documents of Weston, as well as heirlooms of these families. Here are the records of the old Congregational Church, the first school district records, the original survey of a railroad which was proposed to run through Weston in 1844. Here in the library is a pictorial map painted by Roy Williams which depicts the early Weston and points of interest in its history.

This map was one of the additions to the house that was made through the W.P.A. Federal Art project. Another was the large oil painting in the ballroom which pictures the first old-home day ball in Weston on July 4, 1853. The ball took place in this same room. The people shown enjoying the dance are painted from portraits and tintypes of Westonians of that day. Oliver Farrar's granddaughter is painted in a green dress her mother wore at a presidential inaugural ball in Washington. The same green dress is now displayed in the museum.

Some of the pieces in the house were purchased by the Community Club, many were donated or loaned by descendants of early Weston families who still live in Weston. Some of them were sent back to Weston from far places by the descendants of Westonians who had wandered from the valley.

Since its beginning Weston's museum has been growing in interest and it is still growing, still alive. The Community Club has plans for future expansion. One concerns remodelling the attic. This will house a "hired man's room" with early primitive pieces, as well as a room to hold the war mementos of Weston men who served in all our wars from the Revolution to the one just ended.*

The Farrar-Mansur house is of interest to everybody in Weston. It is, however, of special interest to a group who have not always been Westonians. The considerable number of people who have settled in Weston during the past ten years have done so for the most part because they want Weston as their permanent home. They want to put their roots down in this village surrounded by its hills. By collecting the memorabilia of its past, Weston has helped these newcomers to be familiar with the village and its history, to feel that they belong. The museum is therefore an important factor in helping Weston absorb its increasing population, to make for all its inhabitants a common past as well as a common present, and so help to preserve the traditional character of the village.

*Another plan is for an addition to the house in the form of a two-storey ell. Designed by Nelson Page, a well known New York architect, the building will harmonize with the original structure. Its function is to house, on the first floor, a curator of the museum. The second floor will be a gallery to display many of the paintings now in the museum as well as contemporary paintings by artists of southern Vermont. *Editor.*

The Weston Playhouse

A REGIONAL DRAMA CENTER

By ELEANOR W. MARSHALL

THAT Weston should have a summer theater is a natural development from the interest and activity shown in dramatics from the early days of the village. As far back as the late 1820's "theatricals" were given in the ball-room of the tavern, now the Farrar-Mansur house. (A story has been handed down that one amateur actress held her baby under her left arm while she rehearsed her lines, pacing around the area set off for the stage.)

Some years later, because the audiences had outgrown the capacity of the ball-room, performances were given in the second story of the school-house . . . long since torn down . . . which was situated by the pond opposite the present Community Church. The "Proprietors of the Second Story" leased this floor to the various dramatic and singing societies which were then in existence in the village. Upon completion of the present, and larger, school-house in 1864, these clubs staged their performances in the upstairs hall of that building until 1884, when they moved to the Town Hall. A platform had been built, which made it easier for the audience to see the actors. Here for many years the people of Weston presented plays, and the singing societies, as well as the village orchestra, held concerts.

In 1912 the Weston Dramatic Club was organized. On the programs of the plays . . . such dramatic offerings as "Down East," "The Colonel's Maid," "Among the Breakers" . . . the cast of characters list many well known residents of Weston. The Town Hall served as a theater until 1922. In that year the Weston Community Club, an expansion and reorganization of the Dramatic Club, was formed, and received by deed from the Congregational Board of Vermont the Congregational Church building.

That the present theater should be housed in what was once a church is a question which has interested . . . and disturbed some . . .

visitors. For a period of years, when Weston had a much larger population than it has now, there were at least four denominations maintaining their own places of worship. As people moved away from the village, for one reason or another, the congregations dwindled until there were so few left to each church that the doors were closed and most of the buildings torn down. That of the Congregational church was one of those left standing.

It was through a casual conversation that the idea of a playhouse for Weston was born, later to become a tangible matter and developed into what it is today. Some residents of Weston, who had been visiting in the Berkshires and had attended a play at one of the summer theaters there, spoke about how fine it would be for this village to have a really adequate place for local people to stage the several amateur plays and concerts which had been put on each year. The old Congregational church was the largest building available best able to accommodate big audiences, and it had been unused for religious services since 1913. The generosity of Mrs. Herbert Otis Bailey made it possible for the former church building . . . by that time in a state of disrepair . . . to be remodeled in 1935 into what is now spoken of as "the most beautiful summer theater in New England."

Based on the Greek revival style so popular in the early 19th Century, the building, designed by Raymond Follette Austin, has the simplicity and beauty that one associates with Vermont villages. Inside, there is a stage larger and better equipped than that of most summer theaters, and an auditorium with excellent accoustics, as any actor on that stage can testify.

To the playgoer and visitors the murals in the auditorium are of considerable interest. Each represents a scene from four famous plays written by American dramatists and acted by American actors. As one faces the stage, the first painting on the left is from "The Contrasts," by Royall Tyler, who later became a Justice of the Supreme Court of Vermont. Next, there is Little Eva ascending to heaven . . . a scene which has drawn many a tear from audiences seeing "Uncle Tom's Cabin." The right-hand panels show "Rip van Winkle," the role which endeared Joseph Jefferson to so many people; and a comfortable family scene from Eugene O'Neill's "Ah Wilderness." These murals, painted under the auspices of the W.P.A. Federal Art Project, are the work of Roy Williams, an artist who came to Weston in 1930.

After the Playhouse was completed it seemed logical that a group of professional actors and apprentices be asked to present entertain-

ment not only for Weston but other communities. This was in 1937, when the popularity of the summer theater was coming into bloom. Therefore, Harlan Forrest Grant, director of the Theater Arts Department of the Boston Conservatory of Music, was asked to come to Weston. He brought with him young people who were studying acting, staging plays, and all that implies—painting of scenery and the intricate business of lighting. Since 1938 the plays produced by this professional company have been staged by Edward B. Porter, who, as Technical Director, has been responsible for the excellent sets.

It cannot be said that the Playhouse has always paid its way, for there have been difficulties. It was during the season of 1942 that the players really showed what they could do in the face of inconveniences and difficulties. In that year there was gasoline rationing and the audiences, which had formerly come from Woodstock, Manchester, Rutland and Springfield, could not come to Weston. Therefore, the players packed up scenery and props in trucks, themselves in buses, and took the plays to those towns. In 1946, however, the houselights were on again for the full summer season which was the most successful in the history of the Playhouse. There was such demand for seats that after the first three weeks an additional performance was given, making a total of five each week, for the remainder of a 10 week season.

Since 1937, the Weston Players have presented such classics as "The School for Scandal," "Uncle Tom's Cabin," "Rip van Winkle," "Jane Eyre" and "Pygmalion." Their production of "The Contrast" of Royall Tyler was of particular interest to Weston, for Tyler was a frequent visitor to the village. Written in 1787, it is said to be the first play written by an American and played before American audiences by American actors.

Broadway successes of recent years have been included in the players' repertory. Among them have been "Petticoat Fever," "Call it a Day," "Boy Meets Girl," "Accent on Youth," "Tonight at 8:30," "Her Master's Voice," "The Late Christopher Bean," "Seventeen," and "George Washington Slept Here." Other plays presented have been "Outward Bound," "Ladies in Retirement," "Arsenic and Old Lace," "Guest in the House," "Love from a Stranger," "The Petrified Forest" and "Criminal at Large." Still others have been "Our Town," "The Barretts," "Holiday," "You Can't Take it with You," "Blithe Spirit," "The Male Animal" and "Tovarich."

In these productions, the Players have received excellent training and experience under the direction of Mr. Grant and have gone, some

to larger repertory companies, some to Broadway stages, and some have liked Weston so much that they have returned each season.

Among the players who appeared on the Playhouse stage and who later became known on the screen and the metropolitan stage are Peggy Converse, Bud Bridges, Basil Burwell, Elizabeth Fraser, Ella Lithgow, Joseph Tomes, Irene Lindquist and Mickey Brustin . . . to name but a few.

After the summer of 1942 the Playhouse was dark, due to the war, until 1945. Then a summer resident, Robert Burdick, dramatic coach at one of the large Eastern preparatory schools, directed an amateur play, acted by Weston people. In May, 1946, the same group, under the direction of Baird Hall, put on an original one act play, "The Kemble's," and a short musical about the village. This was the beginning of a revival of the interest in amateur dramatics, so long a distinctive feature of Weston life.

Edward Sanborn sketches the Vermont Country Store (*see opposite*)

The Vermont Country Store

REVIVING AN OLD INSTITUTION

By GEORGE WRIGHT, jun.

TO step through the door of the Vermont Country Store at Weston is to step backward in time for fifty years . . . but with important differences. At first glance it is the similarities to the old village store which are most apparent. It seems exactly as recalled from youth or as recalled for us by oldsters sighing for the golden age of their youth. Here is the same dim interior dominated by a central wood-burner, the kerosene lamps hanging by brackets from the ceiling, the big-wheeled coffee-grinder, merchandise piled on the counters, and stacked beside them on the floor, as well as hung from the hand-hewn raftered ceiling.

There is the same odor, too. A pleasant *pot-pourri* is concocted of old woodwork, molasses, kerosene, coffee, woolen yard-goods, spices, tobacco and the wood-burning stove. Settled into a chair by the fire, seeing the red-topped boots hung from the rafters, hearing the monotonous crunch of the coffee-grinder, we can begin to evaluate this store.

Physically, it is an old store. It is in fixtures the continuation of the one operated in 1897 by Gardner Orton and Melvin Teachout at North Calais, Vermont, and now reset in this 115-year-old building in Weston. The building itself, once the local hostelry, is impressive: three-storied, with wide porches across the front of the first two floors and painted the buttermilk-red of rural buildings. Inside, the 1861 oak counters and shelves, the kerosene lighting fixtures, the tools of the country merchant, are either from the North Calais store or have been given to Vrest Orton, the proprietor, by store-keepers in other Vermont towns. The national interest in seeing the re-creation of an authentic old Vermont store is indicated in the recent gift by President Allyn of the National Cash Register Company, of a bulky 1883 cash register from their own museum.

This national interest was manifest by countless articles and editorials in national magazines and papers. The editorial in the *New York Herald Tribune* of April, 1946, is a good example of the type of comment which the Weston revival has inspired. The editor, Geoffrey Parsons, said: "News comes down the line from a land of snowflaked April and a few listed shortages but those of sap buckets and Democrats, that the southern Vermont hill village of Weston plans to open in June an old-time country store museum. Although the large general store, the usually wide-porched trading center of a village and farm population, has not entirely vanished from the rural scheme of things, it has been so reduced in size and supplanted by chain stores and small specialized shops that the furnishings and fixtures of half-forgotten, all purpose emporiums rate as museum pieces. The Weston replica, it is announced, is to have genuinely old counters and shelving salvaged from an ancient store, and it is to contain such features as the high round stove, the big wheel coffee-grinder, the kerosene lamps, and the covered cracker barrels which many an old Vermonter . . . and perhaps an older New Yorker . . . will remember with nostalgic affection. . . .

"For either use or memory the general store is good to retain. We do not doubt that Weston's museum restoration of a once-important institution will have its appreciative visitors this summer . . . even if they bring no butter to "trade in," and do not drive up in a buckboard or fringed-top surrey."

In the limited sense of preserving these old fixtures, the Vermont Country Store is a museum, too. Its properties are not dead exhibits, however, but actively functioning.

To realize their operation fully, it is necessary to recall the old country merchant. In the early stores, the man was more important than the fixtures. He was one of the responsible citizens of the community, the link between man as producer and man as consumer. To his establishment, men came bringing the product of their labor, farm produce or handicrafts, grain, a basket of eggs, or a bundle of hickory axe-handles shaved to shape during winter evenings.

Here also the family found what they could not make, kerosene for their lamps, yard-goods for their women-folk, the whole range of needs which the family found it impossible or uneconomic to make for themselves.

The store-keeper's responsibility enabled the community to exist. As neighbor and friend of his customers he must, of necessity, personally

guarantee the whole range of his products from leather shoes to peppermint candy, baking soda to spading fork, as honest value.

With the growth of larger trading-areas, much of this responsibility to the community has vanished. Now dominating the market is the gaudy, impersonal and efficient selling-machine evolved by the chain-stores. Staffs of technicians and psychologists have devised an apparatus designed to attract the housewife, fill her arms with as many goods as she can possibly afford, and send her away faintly unhappy that she is unable to buy more. It is designed, not to serve a community but to create new—and debatable—needs and to sell more goods.

There has been criticism of the old country store on the basis that its products were bulk goods, not fancy cellophane packages, that it was occasionally unhygienic, and that such products as are advertised on the ancient posters now tacked around the walls of The Vermont Country Store, products such as "Dr. Thomas Eclectric Oil" guaranteed to cure the ailments of man or beast, are products fortunately off the market today. What is neglected in the argument, is to recall that the early merchant was as advanced as anyone of his day, that he kept abreast of developments and introduced them as rapidly as they proved successful or his old products inadequate. Also neglected is the realization that the current fancy packages are paid for by the consumer above the value of the product. Many of the items on display in modern stores are of such dubious quality that there are at least two consumers' groups with a nationwide list of subscribers to bulletins which detail the results of laboratory tests on such commodities, warning against the worst, and listing the least-harmful of the products of the new selling-machine.

In The Vermont Country Store it is the older, personal relationship which exists between merchant and customer. The Ortons have wisely considered that their function was that of selecting legitimate goods representative of the best of Vermont products and finding for them an appreciative group of customers in Vermont and across the country through their mail order catalogues.

Walk along the store counters. Here are iron candlesticks and a folding table from a forge in Wallingford; wooden ware trays and bowls from small shops in Lyndonville, Danville, and Hardwick, heavy woolen blankets from Cavendish, trousers and wool shirts from Johnson. From Weston itself come Peck's rush-seated chairs, the gay peasant-painted woodenware produced by Mrs. Hall, the hand-loomed tweeds woven of tough Scottish wool at The Vermont Guild.

And the food. From Weathersfield the famous Boiled Cider. Ten

whole-grain products, ground locally on stone wheels turned by the water wheel on the Wantastiquet River. Vermont bear's-paw popcorn, the store-crackers made in Montpelier since 1828, maple and apple products from Vermont trees. On the shelves behind the long counters are the better grades of standard food products, mostly New England's famous S. S. Pierce of Boston.

Here, the link is again restored between the producer of honest goods and the consumer looking for an honest value for his money. There has been up to date, unfortunately, little encouragement to the Vermont craftsman, despite the fact that throughout the country the word "Vermont" is synonymous with sound materials, sturdy craftsmanship, and good value. Scattered across the state there are dozens of men and women working their favorite materials. Unless they are fortunate or have had money for a promotional campaign, most of them are restricted to a small area of sales, often confined to producing only as an avocation. Here is a service that The Vermont Country Store now renders to the whole state: that of functioning as a clearing-house for these producers, giving them a national market. It is a double service, for only a comparatively few people are aware that this production exists or how to find it.

As the country store in an older and irrecoverable period was market-place for producer and consumer with the personal integrity of the merchant as guarantor of value to both, so, sitting by the stove here in Weston, we can see the same concept on a wider scale taking shape around us. It will be a service to the nation if the "Country Stores" which are being announced in other states are serving the same function there.

Tired from the war, people are again turning their thoughts and hopes toward the rural areas which have always been, though often ignored, the seed bed of our national strength. There are many signs that the age of the over-grown metropolis is at an end, that the importance of the craftsman and artisan is again being realized, the value of country life newly appreciated.

Perhaps here in Weston, both in the store and in the community itself, what we see is the turn of the cycle . . . here where the old-fashioned is the newest fashion.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Raymond Taylor, was born in Weston and has always lived here. In 1917 he became postmaster of the town and has held that position ever since. An authority on local genealogy and history, Mr. Taylor is the author of a forthcoming "History of Weston."

Vrest Orton, magazine editor, author of several books, and book publisher, came to Weston in 1934 from New York City where he was on the staff of *The American Mercury* and served as an editor of *The Colophon.* He was born in Hardwick, Vermont in 1897.

Baird Hall, a former advertising man and writer for women's magazines, came to Weston in 1941 to operate the woodworking shop for the "Red House" line.

Steven Agnes Hall, Smith College alumna, had written on interior decoration and style for several magazines before she came to Vermont in 1938, settling first in Chester. Mrs. Hall now paints all of the folk-art decoration on the woodenware objects turned out by Red House. She is also an interior decorator and has decorated the Weston Inn.

Paul L. Orton, Boston University graduate and formerly in the machine tool business in Boston, came to Weston in the fall of 1945 to become associated with the Vermont Country Store. He was born over the original Orton store in North Calais, Vermont, in 1906.

Eleanor W. Marshall, wife of Pendleton Marshall, is a Smith College alumna and came to Weston in 1942 from Greenwich, Conn. Mrs. Marshall has written fiction and several articles.

George Wright, Jun., was born in Castleton, Vermont from a long line of Vermonters. Wright served during the war in the army and since his return has been practicing his other art of photography, as well as completing a novel for publication. He has now established a photographic studio in Weston.

VERMONT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

takes pleasure in announcing its 1947

ANNUAL FELLOWSHIP

for the study and writing of

VERMONT HISTORY

Stipend:

Seven hundred to one thousand dollars,
paid as follows:

1. Two hundred dollars upon approval of the project.
2. Five hundred to eight hundred dollars, according to the nature of the manuscript, to be used against costs of publication.

Qualifications:

1. Applicants must be graduates of an accredited college or university.
2. Applicants must submit substantiating references and evidence of their ability in the research in and writing of history, before August 1 of the year of the grant.

Application blanks and suggested lists of suitable fields of research are available from the Director of the Society.

Earle Williams Newton, Director

Montpelier, Vermont